

NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS For ELAP Certified Drinking Water Testing Laboratories

The Department of Health Services' Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP) is responsible for ensuring that regulatory agencies entrusted with protecting and promoting public and environmental health and safety can rely on accurate and timely data generated by laboratories regulated by ELAP. Effective and timely communications between contract laboratories and drinking water suppliers are crucial, particularly when analyte concentrations exceed regulatory levels. The importance of such communications is clearly reflected by the notification requirements in Title 22, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 64819(a). Recently it has come to the attention of ELAP that laboratories have been remiss in carrying out their notification responsibilities. Note that notification procedures will be a focal point of future site visits. Failure to notify may result in a formal reprimand and fiscal penalties.

Section 64419(a) requires that all laboratories that perform Coliform testing (Total Coliform Rule) and Nitrate analysis for Safe Drinking Water Act Compliance formally notify water suppliers within 24 hours for any of the following:

- Total or Fecal Coliform/*E. Coli* positive test results
- A negative invalidated Coliform sample result
- A nitrate result exceeding the MCL of 45 mg/l

When notifying the water supplier, your laboratory must:

- Notify the contact person that has been officially designated by the water supplier. You must make contact with a "live voice". Do not leave a message on an answering machine. In the event that you are unable to make direct "live voice" contact, you must contact the State's Drinking Water Program designated contact person; you can find the appropriate name and number on the water supplier's *Water Quality Emergency Notification Plan*.
- Formally and thoroughly document your notification
- Arrange for resampling within 24 hours

ELAP strongly recommends that your laboratory establish and keep up to date:

- Formal notification procedures for staff
- A readily accessible copy of the water supplier's *Water Quality Emergency Notification Plan* (see attachment) or equivalent for day and night contact numbers

Attached is a copy of a *Water Quality Emergency Notification Plan*. Each water supplier is required to maintain this plan under their drinking water system operating permit. Your laboratory should request a copy of this plan from each water supplier with which you contract for drinking water analyses. **(Appendix A)**

Note that Section 64819(a)(4) requires electronic reporting of all analytical results associated with the Domestic Water Quality and Monitoring Requirements in Chapter 15, Title 22, CCR.

Attached are the previous letters and forms pertaining to notification requirements. Please review these documents carefully to ensure that your laboratory is in compliance with the notification responsibilities (Appendix B, C, D, E, F)

Should you have any questions, please contact your current ELAP auditor.